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Direct Talks Subject to Verifiable Sanctions Lifting, Guarantees

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Report

The brave uprising in Sudan

Medics say three more demonstrators have been killed after Sudanese security forces fired live rounds and teargas in further protests against the country's military rulers.

The latest in a series of demonstrations saw tens of thousands of protesters pouring their anger on the streets in cities across the country.

Ever since the military took power on October 25 ending a partnership with civilian political parties after the removal of long-time ruler Omar al-Bashir as Sudan's ruler in 2019, the protests, along with barricades throughout the capital have been ongoing. Last week also saw a general strike in the country.

According to the Central Committee of Sudanese Doctors, which has aligned itself with the protest movement, the latest deaths mean around 76 protesters have been killed and more than 2,000 others injured in a large-scale deadly crackdown by the military, mainly by gunshots and teargas canisters.

The doctors' group said, "our people are protesting peacefully and using all forms of nonviolent resistance towards a free, democratic, and just country, only to be confronted by the military with the worst crimes".

According to the group, two protesters were killed at a demonstration in the capital Khartoum, one shot in the chest and the other in the head.

It says other protesters were injured in Khartoum and the city of Omdurman. ► Page 5

Opinion

Bid Boland Refinery's outstanding performance a year after its inauguration

By Mahnaz Abdi

TEHRAN- Persian Gulf Bid Boland Gas Refinery in Iran's southwestern Khuzestan Province was officially inaugurated by the previous president Hasan Rouhani in mid-January, 2021.

The refinery, which had previously started its operation, is aimed at increasing the production of sweet gas, reducing the consumption of petroleum products, production of propane, butane, and gas condensate, the export of by-products, the supply of natural gas to urban areas, and supplying ethane required by petrochemical units in the region.

And now, a year after its official inauguration, Bid Boland's prominent activity and achievements are worth mentioning.

It should be also mentioned that in 2020, Bid Boland Refinery project was nominated for the International Project Management Association (IPMA)'s Global Project Excellence Award at the energy sector; it was also awarded as Iran's top mega project by the Ninth National Project Management Award.

As stated by Ali-Mohammad Pour-Reza, the managing director of the refinery, Bid Boland project is leading in terms of benefiting from domestic capabilities.

It is playing a significant role in providing feed to the country's petrochemical plants and completing their output basket.

Bid Boland has also played a great part in materializing the old dream of zero-flaring in the country's oil industry, as in mid-October last year during an official ceremony, the project to end the gas flaring was inaugurated at this refinery. ► Page 4



TEHRAN – The lead U.S. negotiator in Vienna has set a new precondition for making a deal with Iran, joining a propaganda campaign launched by former prisoners some of whom confessed to having spied for the U.S. on Iran.

The negotiator, U.S. Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley, has acknowledged that the issue of four Iranian dual nationals held in Iran was separate from the talks underway in Vienna intended to revive a 2015 nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA).

Malley, however, considered their release as a precondition for an agreement with Iran. All the prisoners in question have Iranian nationality though they also hold U.S. citizenship. They all have been convicted of espionage on behalf of the U.S. ► Page 3

WHO praises Iran for controlling malaria

TEHRAN – Iran has not registered any native cases of malaria for three consecutive years, Tedros Adhanom Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) said, praising Iran for controlling malaria.

Malaria is a mosquito-borne infectious disease that affects humans and other animals; the disease is most commonly spread by an infected female Anopheles mosquito. The

mosquito bite introduces the parasites from the mosquito's saliva into a person's blood.

It causes symptoms that typically include fever, tiredness, vomiting, and headaches. In severe cases, it can cause yellow skin, seizures, coma, or death. Symptoms usually begin ten to fifteen days after being bitten by an infected mosquito.

In the field of communicable diseases, 2021 was a historic year, and with the recommendation of the World Health Organization for the widespread use of the world's first malaria vaccine, tens of thousands of lives could be saved annually, he stated.

He further noted that China and El Salvador were recognized as "malaria-free" countries by WHO last year. ► Page 7

Tourism potential of Bam is still untapped, governor says

TEHRAN – Despite having vast potential for tourism progress, the city of Bam is still somehow a lesser-known destination, the governor of the southern Iranian city has said.

"Insufficient attention has been given to the tourism sector of Bam," ISNA quoted Hadi Shahsavari as saying on Monday.

Despite being home to four UNESCO World Heritage sites, and its tourism potential and capabilities, Bam's tourism industry has been largely ignored, he said.

The region has the potential to become a major tourism hub in the country, tShe official added.

The tourism industry is the world's largest industry of income generation, and because this region's features include a desert, desert tourism can also be added to its attractions, he noted.

While some foreign tourists already know Iran by its Bam Citadel, the citadel could become a symbol of Iran around the world, he mentioned. ► Page 6



Shiraz Khoshk River hosts flocks of gulls

TEHRAN – Flocks of migratory seabirds display stunning scenery flying over the Khoshk River located in Shiraz city of Fars province, on January 25, 2022.



TENDER INVITATION NO. 1400-1014

IRAN ALUMINIUM COMPANY (IRALCO) would like to invite eligible suppliers for the supply of 1000 MT Cryolite on tender basis. Interested companies are allowed to send their competitive offer till 09-February -2022 Based on our required instruction to following address: PO Box 31, opposite Bahonar Park, Natural Resources Boulevard, Arak- Iran Postal code: 3818998116 Attention: Mr. Omid - Mr. Nabuini Tel: +98 86 32162014 +98 86 32162181 NO.49, Mollasadra Ave., Vanak Square, Tehran- Iran, Postal code: 1991614581 Name of office: Managing Director Office, Iranian Aluminum Company. Fax: +98 21 88049028 Tel: +98 21 88049024 For obtaining tender's documents and more information, please check: www.iralco.ir

Public Relations Department of Iran Aluminum Company



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Interview

Latin America emerging from years of U.S.-backed dictatorships: professor

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN – A professor of international human rights at the University of Pittsburgh School of Law says that Latin America is progressively emerging from years of U.S.-backed dictatorships and right-wing governments.

"Latin America is progressively emerging from years of U.S.-backed dictatorships and right-wing governments," Daniel Kovalik tells the Tehran Times.

"Chile is a great example of this, having only recently thrown out the Pinochet-era Constitution and thereby removing the last vestiges of the dictatorship," Kovalik notes.

Following is the text of the interview:

How do you see the process of democratization in Latin America, especially when it comes to Chile?

Latin America is progressively emerging from years of U.S.-backed dictatorships and right-wing governments. Chile is a great example of this, having only recently thrown out the Pinochet-era Constitution and thereby removing the last vestiges of the dictatorship. Honduras is another great example, with the wife of Manuel Zelaya – the President ousted in a U.S.-backed coup in 2009 – having been elected in a landslide victory late last year. This is a resounding rejection of the 2009 coup and the brutal coup governments which followed. Similarly, in Bolivia, the electorate brought back the MAS party of Evo Morales who himself was ousted by a U.S.-backed military coup in 2019. In such examples, we see the march of progress and democratization in Latin America. ► Page 5

Iranian government: Interim nuclear agreement is out of question

TEHRAN — Iran's government spokesman reiterated on Tuesday that an interim nuclear agreement is certainly not on Iran's agenda.

"As has been stated many times, the issue of an interim agreement is not on the agenda of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the negotiating team is focused on lifting the oppressive sanctions in a stable and secure manner," Ali Bahadori Jahromi said in his weekly presser.

The spokesman then went on to say that in his visit to Moscow last week President Ebrahim Raisi did not discuss an interim agreement with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"During the trip to Russia, there was no discussion about an interim agreement, and a return of all parties to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Actions (JCPOA) and the effective lifting of all sanctions have been emphasized." ► Page 2

Iranian military chief: Terrorists trying to spread in the Caucasus, Central Asia



TEHRAN — Iran's armed forces chief warned on Tuesday that terrorist are trying to spread across the region, including the Caucasus and Central Asia.

Major General Mohammad Bagheri made the remarks during a meeting with Azeri Defense Minister Zakir Hasanov, who has visited Iran.

The Iranian military chief also said defense cooperation between Iran and the Republic Azerbaijan will surely expand to a large extent and this will benefit security of the two countries.

"I hope your visit to Iran is a good opportunity for development and consolidation of relations between the two countries, especially in defense, technical and military fields."

He continued by saying that Iran is always happy to see its Azerbaijani brothers, because all the people of Iran feel close to the Muslim nation of Azerbaijan.

Referring to the policy of Iran in opposing occupation, Bagheri said, "The liberation of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, which took place after three decades, pleased the Leader of the Islamic Revolution and the people of Iran."

He added that the two countries have many commonalities in terms of history, religion, language and other issues, and the policy of the Iranian government is to develop relations with neighbors.

"All of this makes us strive to have a much closer relationship with you," he reiterated.

Emphasizing the need to respect the territorial integrity of all countries, the military chief said that Iran is as sensitive to the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan as it is to its own.

Elsewhere in his remarks, the top general said, "Terrorists in Syria and Iraq have been defeated, but not destroyed."

ISIS, also called Daesh in its Arabic acronym, unleashed its biggest attack in Syria since the fall of its "caliphate" three years ago. More than 100 ISIS militants assaulted the main prison holding terrorists, sparking a battle with Kurdish fighters that continued 24 hours later and left dozens dead on Friday, NBC news reported.

Across the border in Iraq, ISIS gunmen stormed an army barracks north of Baghdad before dawn on Friday while soldiers inside slept, killing 11 before escaping — the deadliest attack in months on Iraq's military.

"These terrorists are trying to spread the region, including Afghanistan, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Confronting them requires the cooperation of the countries of the region."

He then stressed the need for more consultations between the two countries in order to prevent misunderstandings, saying Iran's principled policy is to resolve regional issues by the countries of the region, without foreign interference.

Bagheri also said the presence of Israel in the region is a source of division and a threat to the security and stability of the countries in the region.

He also expressed Iran's readiness to participate in the reconstruction of the liberated territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

In the meeting, the Azeri defense minister also gave a detailed explanation about the operation that liberated the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the 44-day war in 2020.

Council powers France, China, Britain and Russia.

"And our indirect negotiations with the U.S. currently are... via (EU diplomat Enrique) Mora and one or two other countries present at the Vienna talks," he added.

Ali Shamkhani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, also said on Tuesday that way of interaction with the Americans will change only if "a good agreement" is within reach.

"So far contacts with the American team present in Vienna have been through unofficial letter and there has been no and there will be no need for something more than this. This way of contact will be replaced with other ways only when a good agreement is within reach," Shamkhani tweeted.

Iran had previously stated that the U.S. must "change course" and return to the nuclear deal, prior to any direct talks between the two arch-foes in Vienna.

The negotiations, which seek to bring Washington back to the accord and ensure Iran returns to its commitments under the deal, started in April, and resumed in late November, after they were suspended in June as Iran elected President Ebrahim Raisi.

U.S.-Iran relations have been severed since April 1980, just months after the fall of the shah and the occupation of the American embassy by students.

They worsened significantly after Washington withdrew from the nuclear deal and imposed sanctions on Tehran.

(See full text at tehrantimes.com)

Tehran-Moscow ties will be strengthened following Raisi's trip to Russia: commentary

TEHRAN — Prior to his departure for Moscow last week, Ebrahim Raisi expressed hope that the visit, the first by an Iranian president in almost five years, would lead to a "turning point" in his country's relations with Russia.

In the Russian capital, both Raisi and his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, supported improving bilateral ties during a three-hour meeting on January 19 in which they also discussed regional and international issues.

For their part, Iran's petroleum and economy ministers who accompanied Raisi said their talks with their counterparts exceeded expectations. Without disclosing many details, the ministers said agreements were made in trade, energy, transportation and banking sectors and promised that the results would be felt in the foreseeable future.

Following the two-day visit on January 19 and 20, analysts said Iran and Russia were on track to improve their ties across the board — but the scale and timing were complicated by a number of factors.

As in previous years, comprehensive United States sanctions on Iran are sure to complicate any commitments, for as long as they persist.

Meanwhile, the record figure of Iran-Russia bilateral trade that exceeded \$3.5bn in 2021, according to Iran's ambassador in Moscow, still falls far short compared with the levels reached between Russia and several other regional actors.

"The visit seems more ceremonial than a substantive turning point in bilateral relations,"

Nicole Grajewski, a research fellow with the International Security Program at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, said a new and improved 20-year cooperation agreement between Iran and Russia has yet to be finalized, and Raisi only handed



over Iran's proposed draft during his trip.

"That being said, Russia-Iran relations are significantly stronger today than they were the last time an Iranian president visited Russia in 2017 under [Hassan] Rouhani," Grajewski told Al Jazeera, referring to Raisi's predecessor, whose term ended in August 2021.

The fate of the ongoing intensive talks in Vienna aimed at restoring Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers will still play a major role in the future of Iran's ties with Russia.

Russia, a signatory, has been actively trying to facilitate the revival of the landmark accord that the U.S. unilaterally abandoned in 2018, and has been a mediating force between Iran, the European signatories and the U.S.

"It is very important for me to know your opinion on the JCPOA," Putin told Raisi at the January 19 meeting, referring to the deal by its formal name, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

All sides have attested that some real progress has been achieved in recent weeks in the Austrian capital, but resolving outstanding political issues appears to hinge on concessions by both Iran and the U.S.

"The Iranian nuclear issue has historically affected Russia-Iran relations but it has been variable in its impact across certain issues," the Belfer Center's Grajewski said.

Direct talks subject to verifiable sanctions lifting, guarantees

TEHRAN — For the past two days, Iranian officials have been saying that Iran doesn't object to direct negotiations with the United States. However, direct dialogue is subject to some pre-requisites.

On Monday, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian said that the United States had sent several messages to Iran to sit down and directly negotiate with Iran. He further noted that a direct negotiation with the U.S. is possible, provided the talks would reach a stage that requires a form of dialogue.

"The United States sends messages calling for direct talks with us. Our talks with the United States are through (European Union's Enrique) Mora and one or two JCPOA member states in Vienna. We did not have any direct negotiations (with the U.S.) at all. However, if we reach a stage in the negotiation process where reaching a good agreement requires having a dialogue with the United States at some level, we will not ignore it," the foreign minister noted.

Also, on Monday night, spokesman for the Iranian Parliament National Security and Foreign Policy Committee said that Tehran doesn't rule out direct negotiations with the U.S.

"Iran doesn't object direct negotiations

with the United States, provided they show goodwill. So far, they have proven the opposite," Mahmoud Abbaszadeh Meshkini told the national TV.

Similarly, Ali Shamkhani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said on Tuesday that way of interaction with the Americans will change only if "a good agreement" is possible.

"So far contacts with the American team present in Vienna have been through unofficial letter and there has been no and there will be no need for something more than this. This way of contact will be replaced with other ways only when a good agreement is within reach," Shamkhani tweeted.

Iran has never ruled out the possibility of the direct negotiations with the United States, but Tehran has preconditions for direct negotiation. These preconditions include putting an end to the maximum pressure campaign, lifting the sanctions verifiably, give the necessary guarantees not to violate the agreement or mock international law again.

Monday night's pulse was misunderstood by the Western mainstream media, as they mainly paid attention to the shell, not the pearl inside the shell. The Western media

Iranian government: Interim nuclear agreement is out of question

From page 1 ► Elsewhere in his remarks, Bahadori Jahromi said that people will soon feel the outcomes of Raisi's visit to Moscow.

The meeting between Raisi and Putin last for three hours.

The ministers of petroleum, economy and transport also held

talks with their counterparts.

"During this trip, bilateral and multilateral issues were discussed in all areas, and extensive agreements were made..., agreements in the fields of oil and railways were concluded between the two countries," he elaborated.

"The Vienna talks are a central aspect of the Russia-Iran relationship today. Moscow has historically adopted a constructive position on Iran's nuclear program even during low points of U.S.-Russia relations after Ukraine."

However, Grajewski pointed out that if the talks fail, different aspects of the two countries' relations could be affected.

For instance, the two have been discussing the possibility of Iran purchasing advanced arms — especially the top of the line S-400 air defense systems and Su-35 fighter jets.

Such a prospect is made possible by the lifting of a United Nations embargo on conventional arms sales to Iran in 2020 as a result of the nuclear deal, something Russia supported.

According to Samuel Ramani, associate fellow at the Royal United Service Institute, Russia may not be eager to sell the arms to Iran at the moment either.

"Russia's overall policy in the Middle East is to be friends with all, allies of none, enemies of none, so selling arms to Iran might disrupt its efforts to balance closer ties with Israel and the UAE, in particular, as tensions are heightened between these countries and Tehran right now and Saudi Arabia," he told Al Jazeera.

But that does not mean Iran and Russia are disinterested in boosting military cooperation,

as the two held a joint trilateral naval drill with China in an area north of the Indian Ocean on Friday.

Shared regional interests

Observers say Iran and Russia have shared interests across the region that will be maintained or improved regardless of he two presidents' meeting.

Both Raisi and Putin praised "successful" joint efforts in Syria, where the two countries support President Bashar al-Assad in the country's 10-year war. They agreed that "combating terrorism" in Syria is a shared goal.

Iran and Russia have a shared concern about the fate of Taliban-controlled Afghanistan after the chaotic U.S. exit in August. Both have been active in organizing talks to find solutions on a number of issues.

Along with China, Iran and Russia have repeatedly denounced U.S. "unilateralism". And Moscow and Beijing recently supported Tehran's successful bid to become a full member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

At the meeting Putin also expressed his support for Iran to gain a larger foothold in the Eurasian Economic Union, and said both sides are working to create a free-trade zone.

Lastly, Russia has been vocal about its interests in being increasingly engaged in mediating efforts on Persian Gulf and regional security.

On January 21, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Russia wants to organize a conference to resolve regional issues through dialogue.

Lavrov described it as "a conference that would bring Iranians and Arabs together where Iran would not be the subject of discussion and where each side would lay their concerns on the table" and would address issues with Yemen, Syria and Iraq as well.

tried to create a hype about the notion of direct negotiation itself. However, it seems they are negligent toward the meaning of those words. What the Iranian officials believe in is that the U.S. has been screaming for direct talks with Iran for almost a year, and Iran has given its own responses. Direct negotiation with a bully has never been part of Iran's foreign policy, as the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei put it at a televised speech with the people of Qom on January 9.

"Sometimes, we negotiate, talk, and interact with the enemy, for example. This is another matter. The Revolution tells us that one should not give up in the face of bullying and the words of the enemy. We have not surrendered until now, thankfully, and it will be the same afterwards. This is one of the principles (of the Islamic Revolution)," the Leader remarked.

A clear path has been drawn for the United States now. You sought to have direct talks with Iran, now you have got your chance. The United States must remove the sanctions verifiably, end the maximum pressure campaign, and give tangible and clear guarantees that it will not renege on its commitments.

said arranging such number of working meetings and drafting plans in such a short time are unique.

He said economic and commercial issues as well as political, scientific and cultural issues were the main focus of talks.

The government spokesman

The U.S. ‘hostage’ that turned out to be a spy

From Page 1 ► But Malley claimed that they are “hostages”.

“They’re separate and we’re pursuing both of them. But I will say it is very hard for us to imagine getting back into the nuclear deal while four innocent Americans are being held hostage by Iran,” the chief U.S. negotiator told Reuters.

He further said that the U.S. was conducting talks indirectly with Iran on the prisoner’s issue in parallel with the nuclear talks.

Malley made the remarks in a joint interview with Barry Rosen, a 77-year-old former U.S. diplomat who has been spearheading a protest just outside the hotel at which the Vienna talks are taking place. Rosen went on a hunger strike in Vienna to demand the release of American prisoners in Iran. He was joined by a number of Iranian dissidents and some former prisoners in Iran such as Nizar Zakka.

Iran hasn’t ruled out a prisoner swap with the U.S. but said it will by no means accept the U.S. setting the release of prisoners as a precondition for making a deal in Vienna. This position derives from a belief that the U.S. is seeking to exploit the situation in Vienna to secure the release of prisoners who are convicted of espionage.



For example, Zakka was released in 2019 from an Iranian prison after being convicted of spying for the U.S. He was arrested in Tehran in 2015 and then released from prison in June 2019. In private meetings, Zakka had repeatedly confessed that he was spying for the U.S. government.

The Tehran Times recently reported that Zakka had submitted on April 20, 2020 an application for naturalization with U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The answer he received from the agency was so disappointing to him that he decided to reach out to some influential people in Washington, including Malley, to

save what can be saved.

After reviewing the application of Zakka for naturalization, the USCIS turned down his request and denied him naturalization. The main reason why his application for naturalization was turned down was that he was physically absent from the United States for a long time. Zakka obtained permanent resident status in mid-April 2012, and in April 2020 he submitted his application to USCIS, which in turn rejected his application due to his long-time absence from the U.S.

To convince officials with the USCIS that he deserved

naturalization despite his long-time absence from the U.S, Zakka lodged an appeal against the decision of the USCIS.

In his appeal, Zakka explicitly confessed that he was imprisoned in Iran due to his work with the U.S. government. He described his trip to Iran during which he was arrested as pre-approved and funded by the U.S. State Department, according to insiders in Washington.

To overcome the Kafkaesque USCIS denial of his application for naturalization, Zakka in his appeal delved deeply into what he had done in Iran before his arrest. Zakka said he was performing work under a contract with the U.S. State Department and was regularly reporting to it.

He also confessed that he served in a security-related position while implementing a mission that required significant security measures.

These are all words that were uttered by Zakka himself. Of course, Iran has long said that Zakka was caught red-handed during his trip to Iran. But many in Washington as well as in the media refused to believe how far Zakka went in his perilous activities in Iran.

Iran-Russia-China coalition could be very painful for the West: ambassador

TEHRAN – Iranian Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali has said that possible coalition of Iran, Russia and China would be very painful for the West.

“Naturally, the United States and the West in general are concerned about new coalitions, which are currently [being created] on the international arena. A coalition of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Russian Federation and the People’s Republic of China is an example of such strategic coalitions,” the ambassador said on Monday, according to Russian news agency TASS.

Jalali made the remarks during his working visit to Russia’s North Caucasus region of North Ossetia.

The ambassador described Russia as a major power with huge economic, defense, military and technological potential. China, in his words, was about to overtake the United States in terms of economic growth. Iran, according to Jalali, was a large economically developed country, which has made huge progress in its defense industry.

“That is why creating this kind of coalition [involving Russia, Iran and China] would mean a lot of pain for the West,” the Iranian diplomat said.

Iranian President Ayatollah Seyed Ebrahim Raisi paid a two-day visit to Russia last week where he met with Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Jalali said the meeting will help the ties between the countries to become stronger.

“Fortunately, Iran and Russia have very close ties

now,” the ambassador said. The presidents had a “lengthy and very strategic meeting,” he said.

“The content of the meeting is a good roadmap for further development of our bilateral relations,” Jalali said.

According to Jalali, Iran and Russia have very much in common and share similar views on international politics.

Science and education are some of the key areas of cooperation, the ambassador said. His visit included a stop at North Ossetia’s Khetagurov State University.

Jalali visited the North Ossetia-Alania Region for the first time.

Ayatollah Raisi has expressed hope that his recent visit to Russia would be a turning point in improving relations between Tehran and Moscow.

Upon returning from a two-day visit to Russia, Ayatollah Raisi told reporters that “the topics of discussion in this visit were in line with the realization of the Islamic Republic of Iran’s foreign policy, which is maximum interaction with world countries, especially allies.”

Noting that a fundamental agreement was reached during the visit to expand comprehensive, stable and beneficial relations between the two countries, the president added, “Undoubtedly, the development of relations with Russia will contribute to the security and

welfare of the two nations.”

He said, “I hope that the visit to Russia will be a turning point in improving relations with the friendly and neighboring country of Russia, and that the combination of these relations will help improve the level of security in the region and resolve regional and global crises.”

In a speech delivered before the Russian State Duma, Ayatollah Raisi said Iran seeks “maximum interaction” with all countries around the world with the aim of forming a “civilized global community”.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran seeks ‘maximum interaction’ with all countries around the world, especially its neighbors and allies. The purpose and basis of this cooperation and interaction is the mutual interests of nations and the increasing formation of a ‘civilized global community’. This path can be achieved through the cooperation of independent countries with high cultures and attention to the principles of ‘justice, morality and spirituality’. Undoubtedly, the root of what human society suffers from today is the separation of politics from morality and spirituality. Violence, terrorism, the collapse of the family institution, and the spread of drugs do not come from a spiritualist mind-set. Any structure created on the basis of this segregation intensifies the suffering of humanity and, instead of promoting justice, structures oppression and creates the roots causes of domination,” he stated.



necessary guarantees in the JCPOA, and the United States withdrew from the agreement at no cost, so this experience is very valuable to us.”

The lawmaker added, “The Islamic Republic has gone through maximum sanctions. Of course, the people were under a lot of livelihood pressures, and this passage was not without cost, but the Americans imposed economic pressures on the people with the aim of imposing further cost. Sanctions have been almost neutralized and our oil sales are increasing daily.”

Meshkini added, “The Islamic Republic of Iran has found good regional and trans-regional partners during this period, and according to the 25-year agreement between Iran and China, it is planned to invest about \$400-500 billion in the country. China and Russia also helped us a lot in the negotiations. They are not like the previous periods.”

IRAN IN FOCUS

JANUARY 26, 2022

Straight Truth
TEHRAN TIMES

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SPORTS

Chris Beath to officiate Iran v Iraq match in 2022 WCQ

TEHRAN – Australian referee Christopher James Beath will be in charge of Thursday’s match between Iran and Iraq in the 2022 World Cup qualifier.

He will be assisted by his countrymen Ashley Beecham and Anton Shchetinin in this match.

Beath was added to the FIFA International Referees List in 2011.

Group A leaders Iran will qualify for the 2022 FIFA World Cup with a win over Iraq.

In 2015, Beath was involved in an exchange program where he refereed in the J-League.

On 4 April 2017, Chris Beath was appointed as one of the inaugural video assistant referees (VARs) in the Hyundai A-League, the first top-tier football league in the world to implement the technology.

In January 2018, Beath was selected as one of the referees for the 2018 AFC U-23 Championship held in China. Beath refereed the opening fixture of this tournament.

On 5 December 2018, Beath was appointed to be a referee at the 2019 AFC Asian Cup in the United Arab Emirates.

In August 2021, Beath was appointed to the Brazil vs Spain Gold Medal Match at the COVID delayed 2020 Summer Olympics.

Iran seek first ever win in AFC Women’s Asian Cup

TEHRAN – Chinese Taipei and Iran are set for a collision course in their final Group A fixture of the AFC Women’s Asian Cup India 2022 at the D.Y. Patil Stadium on Wednesday.

Both sides are still chasing their first win, with Iran falling to a 7-0 defeat against China PR, while Chinese Taipei opened their campaign with a 4-0 loss to the Steel Roses.

At stake will be the runners-up spot, which will confirm the second team from Group A into the quarter-finals.

Despite starting their campaign with a defeat, Chinese Taipei head coach Kazuo Echigo is optimistic of his team’s chances of advancing into the quarter-finals.

“This is a very tough competition, and the Chinese team was very well prepared, but we did what we could do,” said Echigo. “Everybody gave their best efforts throughout the game, we made a point of that.

“Looking ahead, I believe we can make some improvements for our next match. I’m sure the players will be eager to show what they are capable of.”

“This is a very tough competition, and the Chinese team was very well prepared, but we did what we could do,” said Echigo. “Everybody gave their best efforts throughout the game, we made a point of that.

“Looking ahead, I believe we can make some improvements for our next match. I’m sure the players will be eager to show what they are capable of.”

Meanwhile, Iran head coach Maryam Irandoost wants her team to be focused on the match despite their heavy defeat against China on Sunday. Iran held their own against China before conceding the opener in the 28th minute and the eight-time champions went on to score six more goals to seal the win.

“It was a very tough game, but my players tried hard until the last minute,” said Irandoost. “We have seen, even in the men’s World Cup, some great teams can concede seven goals. It’s the first time we’ve participated in this tournament, and it is a great experience for us.

“After the final whistle I gathered my players and told them we had finished that match. I told the players to promise me that they would put it behind them. We have two training sessions left, and we will shift our focus towards the Chinese Taipei match and be prepared for it.”

Four Iran’s women’s players test positive for COVID-19

TEHRAN – Four players of Iran’s women’s football team have tested positive for COVID-19.

Samaneh Chahkandi, Sana Sadeghi, Negin Zandi and Marzieh Nikkiah have contracted the virus and will miss the match against Chinese Taipei in Group A of the AFC Women’s Asian Cup India 2022 scheduled for Wednesday at the D.Y. Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai.

Both sides are still chasing their first win, with Iran falling to a 7-0 defeat against China, while Chinese Taipei opened their campaign with a 4-0 loss to the Steel Roses.

It will be a big blow for debutants Iran since the runners-up will confirm the second team from Group A into the quarter-finals.

In an unforeseen turn of events, hosts India were on Monday forced to withdraw from the AFC Women’s Asian Cup 2022 after 13 players of the team tested positive for the virus.

Iran beat Kyrgyzstan in CAFA Women’s Futsal Championship

TEHRAN – Iran beat Kyrgyzstan 5-0 in the CAFA Women’s Futsal Championship 2022 on Tuesday.

Sahar Papi, Nastaran Moghimi, Fereshteh Karimi, Fatemeh Rahmati and Sara Shirbeigi scored for Iran.

Iran have already defeated Uzbekistan (5-2), Tajikistan (12-0) and Kyrgyzstan (10-0) in the tournament.

The four-team competition is being held at the Dushanbe Multi-functional Sports Complex from Jan. 21 to 28.

Tajikistan, Iran, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan compete in the tournament.

The teams will play each other twice.

The Central Asian Football Association (CAFA) is an association of the football playing nations in Central Asia.

Iran learn fate at 2022 Asian Women’s Junior Handball Championship

TEHRAN – Iranian girls learned their opponents at the 2022 Asian Women’s Junior Handball Championship.

Iran are pitted against hosts Kazakhstan, Chinese Taipei and Kuwait in Group B.

Uzbekistan, South Korea, Syria and India are in Group A.

The 2022 Asian Women’s Junior Handball Championship will be 16th edition of the championship scheduled to be held from Feb 13 to 20 in Almaty, Kazakhstan under the aegis of Asian Handball Federation.

It will be the fifth time in history that the championship will be organized by the Kazakhstan Handball Federation.

It also acts as the qualification tournament for the 2022 Women’s Junior World Handball Championship, with top three teams from the championship directly qualifying for the event to be held in Slovenia.

Previously the championship was scheduled to be held in Uzbekistan, but in December 2021, AHF decided to move the event to Kazakhstan due to unavoidable circumstances.

Bid Boland Refinery's outstanding performance a year after its inauguration

From page 1► The project to process associated gas from crude oil production, rather than burn it through flaring, was a big environmental event.

It was aimed to create value-added, prevent pollution resulted from gas flaring and serve public health and environment.

Bid Boland Refinery had signed three deals worth €165 million with domestic companies for collecting and recovering flare gases of Rag-Sefid offshore oilfield in early April 2021.

The mentioned deals covered construction of 24 centrifugal compressors as well as Rag-Sefid's flare gas recovery station.

And in terms of production, as recently announced by the refinery's managing director, over 3.5 billion cubic meters of gas has been refined in this refinery during the ten-month period since the beginning of current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2021).

Emphasizing that Bid Boland is taking steps toward continuous and sustainable production with all its capabilities, Ali-Mohammad Pour-Reza said that the ten-month output indicates about 14.7 percent growth on an annual basis.

The refinery, in which \$3.4 billion has been



invested, took 36 months to complete, and when operating at full capacity it will generate \$700 million of revenue every year.

It should be also mentioned that having two propane storage tanks with a capacity of 90,000 cubic meters, two butane product storage tanks with a capacity of 44,000 cubic meters, and two pentanes plus storage tanks with a capacity of 58,000 cubic meters, Bid Boland's export complex will be able to store a total of 192,000 tons of its export products.

Persian Gulf Bid Boland Complex is one of the huge and strategic projects in Iran's oil and gas industry, which in addition to creating suitable employment, plays a significant role in economic and industrial development of the country.

TPO to use new criteria for ranking exporters

TEHRAN - Trade Promotion Organization (TPO) of Iran has published a new methodology for evaluating the special indicators used for ranking the country's export companies, an official with the organization announced.

According to TPO Deputy Head Farhad Nouri, the new method is aimed to determine the country's real capable export companies so that special and targeted support can be provided to them.

"All exporters should review and complete the survey of export ranking indicators through the comprehensive trade system," Nouri said.

Over 10,000 rural water supply projects to be implemented in 4 years

TEHRAN - Iranian Energy Ministry plans to implement over 10,000 water supply projects in rural areas across the country in the next four years, an official with Water and Wastewater Company of Iran announced.

According to Shahin Pakrouh, the deputy managing director of the company for engineering and development affairs, over 78 major water supply projects are also going to be implemented in urban areas, IRIB reported.

Pakrouh noted that the parliament and the government are currently collaborating in order to secure the necessary funding for the implementation of the mentioned projects.

He further mentioned the

surge in water consumption across the country and stated that implementing water supply projects is not going to resolve the country's water problems if proper consumption management programs are not also envisioned.

The official further said that currently, the demand for water is much more than the supply and there is a great imbalance in this regard.

According to Pakrouh, considering the significant decrease in rainfall and consequently, the decline of the country's water resources, the upward trend of the water consumption has created serious problems.



"It is clear that in addition to development measures, we must also improve managerial efficiency," he said.

Iran has been wrestling with severe drought over the past decade and the situation is expected to get worsened in the future.

According to the World Meteorological Organization's multiannual forecast, in the next

and veal had the lion's share in the country's red meat output during the ninth month with 28,809 tons, followed by lamb and mutton with 20,189 tons, goat meat with 3,368 tons, and red meat from other livestock with 1,026 tons.

As reported, the amount of red meat supply in the official slaughterhouses of the country in the ninth month of this year has fallen 0.3 percent compared to the previous month.

Iran's deputy agriculture minister, Morteza Rezaei, has said that currently the per capita consumption of red meat is 12.5 kilograms, chicken meat 31.25 kilograms, raw milk 124

kilograms, eggs 11.72 kilograms and honey 1.35 kilograms in the country.

Iran is among the leading consumers of red meat in the West Asia region with lamb being the most sought after.

However, the consumption per person is around a third of what is normally seen in countries like the U.S. and Australia, mainly due to the prohibition of pork in Islamic law.

The major part of Iran's red meat imports comes from countries like Brazil, where Iranian supervisors directly control culling methods to ensure they comply with religious rules.

Non-oil exports rise 38% in 10 months yr/yr

TEHRAN - The value of Iran's non-oil exports rose 38 percent during the first 10 months of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2021-January 20, 2022), as compared to the same period of time in the past year, head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Customs Administration (IRICA) announced.

Speaking to the press in a ceremony on the occasion of International Customs Day, on Tuesday, Alireza Moghadasi said Iran exported over 100 million tons of non-oil products worth \$38.763 billion in the mentioned period, IRNA reported.

According to Moghadasi, the weight of exports in the mentioned period also grew by seven percent in comparison to the figure for the previous fiscal year's same 10 months.

He said major export destinations of the Iranian non-oil goods were

China, Iraq, and Turkey during the said 10 months.

The IRICA head further announced that the Islamic Republic imported 33 million tons of non-oil commodities worth \$41.473 billion in the mentioned period, with a 34-percent growth in value and a 17-percent rise in weight, year on year.

The United Arab Emirates was the top exporter to Iran in the said period, followed by China, Turkey, Germany, and Switzerland, he stated.

According to the official, out of the total non-oil goods imported into the country in the first 10 months of this year, 25 million tons worth \$15 billion were basic goods, which indicates an increase of 26 percent in weight and 56 percent in value, year on year.

Moghadasi noted that currently about five million tons of



IRICA Head Alireza Moghadasi (C) speaks at a ceremony on the occasion of International Customs Day in Tehran on Tuesday

commodities are stored at the country's customs for which the clearance procedures will be carried out soon.

"There are 160 customs active in the country, and this number is increasing with the creation of new free zones and economic areas," he added.

IRICA has previously announced that the value of Iran's non-oil trade stood at \$73 billion in the past Iranian calendar year.

IRICA former Head Mehdi Mir-Ashrafi had put the weight of non-oil trade at 146.4 million tons and said that the figure showed a 25-million-ton annual decline, which is the result of sanctions and coronavirus pandemic.

Iran's non-oil export was 112 million tons valued at \$34.5 billion, and that of import was 34.4 million tons worth \$38.5 billion in the past year, the official added.

Among the country's non-oil export destinations, China was the first, with importing \$8.9 billion worth of products, Iraq was the second with importing \$7.3 billion, the United Arab Emirates the third with importing \$4.6 billion, Turkey the fourth with importing \$2.5 billion, and Afghanistan the fifth with importing \$2.2 billion, Mir-Ashrafi announced, and named gasoline, natural gas, polyethylene, propane, and pistachio as Iran's major exported products during the past year.

He further named Iran's top sources of non-oil imports in the said time, as China with exporting \$9.7 billion worth of products to the Islamic Republic, the UAE with \$9.6 billion, Turkey with \$4.3 billion, India with \$2.1 billion, and Germany with \$1.8 billion, respectively, and mentioned corn, cellphone, rice, oil meal, and oilseeds, wheat, and raw oil as the major imported items.

'Auto industry to be fully reformed following Industry Ministry's evolution plan'

TEHRAN - Iranian Industry, Mining, and Trade Minister Reza Fatemi-Amin has said the country's automotive industry is going to undergo a complete reform after the implementation of his ministry's two-year evolution program, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

Stating that nine transformation projects have been prepared for the automobile industry, Fatemi-Amin said: "The general plan is that in [the Iranian calendar year] 1401 (begins on March 21) the structure of the automobile industry and the relations between parts manufacturers and automakers will be reformed and the overall promised production target will be achieved in [the Iranian calendar year] 1404 (begins in March 2025)."

The minister considered the current situation of the automotive industry very problematic and added: "We have done a lot of work in the automotive industry and we have had good

successes and progress, but the result has not been satisfactory for the general public and the customers."

Referring to the complexities of the automotive industry, he noted: "A car has more than 2,000 parts and every day 4,000 cars are produced in the country; We do not have any other industries with such managerial, economic and technological complexities."

In late December 2021, Fatemi-Amin had announced that his ministry prepared a nine-axis program for evolution in the automotive industry which would be published soon.

The mentioned program includes all challenges and solutions in this industry, the minister said.

"Our plan is to produce 1.6 million vehicles next year (begins in March 2022), which will increase to three million units in [the Iranian calendar year] 1404 (begins in March 2025),



and 30 percent of the production, equivalent to about one million units, should be sent to export markets," the official added.

"Car is one of the most political products and important issues in the country, which on the one hand is highly challenged and on the other hand has various capacities," the official stated.

Pricing should be such that domestic manufacturing has an advantage, the minister further reiterated.

Aliyev calls for Iran's participation in Azerbaijan's reconstruction projects

TEHRAN - Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev has called on Iranian companies to have active participation in the development and reconstruction of the country's Karabakh region which has been recently liberated, IRNA reported.

Speaking in a virtual meeting with the Iranian Minister of Transport and Urban Development Rostam Ghasemi, Aliyev described his meeting with the Iranian president in Ashgabat as a turning point in the brotherly and friendly relations of the two countries.

Ghasemi, for his part, said that Iran enjoys good experiences in the reconstruction of different countries in the region, and this cooperation will contribute to the sustainable development and security of

the region.

The Iranian minister, who is also the head of the two countries' Joint Economic Committee, traveled to Azerbaijan on top of a delegation on Monday to visit the country's economic areas and explore avenues of mutual cooperation.

Ghasemi was welcomed by Azerbaijan's Deputy Prime Minister Shahin Mustafayev and Iranian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Seyed Abbas Mousavi.

During their two-day visit, the Iranian delegation was scheduled to meet with the officials of the Republic of Azerbaijan to discuss the prospects for the development of cooperation between the two countries in various economic fields.

TEDPIX loses 26,000 points on Tuesday

TEHRAN- TEDPIX, the main index of Tehran Stock Exchange (TSE), dropped 26,661 points to 1.208 million on Tuesday.

Over 6.345 billion securities worth 36.491 trillion rials (about \$125.83 million) were traded at the TSE.

The first market's index fell 22,468 points, and the second market's index dropped 44,591 points.

TEDPIX lost 55,000 points (4.3 percent) to 1.279 million in the past Iranian calendar week (ended on Friday).

During the past week, the indices of Mobarakeh Steel Company, Bandar Abbas Oil Refining Company, Isfahan Oil Refinery, Tehran Oil Refining Company, Iran Khodro Company, Saipa Company, and National Iranian Copper Company were the most widely



followed ones.

The government has applied several new changes in the national budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year (begins on March 21, 2022) which according to experts and analysts will ensure the stock market's stability and growth in the coming years, IRNA reported.

Reducing taxes on production units active in the stock market, strengthening

the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund, eliminating subsidized foreign currency allocations, and stabilizing the ownership interest of the mines are some of the measures considered in the budget bill to support the capital market.

Allocating a 20-percent tax on legal entities is considered in next year's budget bill which is less than the previous years. Reducing the taxes imposed on production units will make them more profitable and therefore their performance in the stock market will improve.

Also, the direct taxes collected from production units is expected to be injected into the Capital Market Development and Stabilization Fund in order to be used to improve and develop the market.



TEHRAN- Statistical Center of Iran (SCI) announced that production of red meat in Iran stood at 54,947 tons in the ninth month of the current Iranian calendar year (November 22-December 21, 2021), showing 52 percent growth compared to the same month in the past year.

The SCI's report said that beef

Latin America emerging from years of U.S.-backed dictatorships: professor

“Sanctions have tended to rally the people of the targeted nations around their governments”



From page 1 ► **Why do Latin American states generally have a tendency toward leftists that are at odds with American liberal democracy?**

I don't see the leftist governments in Latin America in this way, though I understand that this is the prevailing view put forth by the mainstream media. Look for example at the Chavista Revolution in Venezuela. That Revolution, led by the democratically-elected Hugo Chavez, and now by Nicolas Maduro, led to the radical democratization of Venezuela which, according to Jimmy Carter, has the very best electoral process in the world. The same is true with the Sandinista Revolution in Nicaragua. The Sandinistas brought

democracy to Nicaragua for the first time, having ousted the U.S.-backed Somoza dictatorship in 1979, and holding the first free and fair elections in 1984. The Sandinistas then peacefully stood down from office when they lost the election of 1990. These are two good examples of how Leftists have brought democracy to their countries. Even in Cuba, the government is far more representative of its people than the brutal dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista which was overthrown by the current revolutionary government.

For decades, the revolutions and anti-imperialist struggles in Latin America were a model for many people around the world. Do you think this wave has declined or is still alive?

Certainly, the Pink Tide you are referencing has had set-backs due to U.S. meddling in countries such as Honduras, Brazil and Paraguay, but the Latin American people have continued to resist and are winning again. Thus, leftists have been elected in countries like Chile, Argentina, Mexico, Honduras, Peru and Bolivia. And, it looks like Lula de Silva, after being arrested in the U.S.-backed “Car Wash Campaign,” has a good chance of being re-elected in Brazil. And so, the Pink Tide is

certainly on the rise again.

What are the common traits of leaders of anti-imperialist movements in Latin America and resistance movements in West Asia?

All of these leaders are committed to progressive social change favoring the poor, and all of them are committed to resisting foreign intervention, particularly by the U.S. and its Western allies. And, they are all committed to helping each other in this resistance.

How do you evaluate the results of U.S. sanctions on anti-imperialist governments in Latin America? Do you think sanction policy has been efficient?

These sanctions have been incredibly efficient in bringing suffering and death to civilians in the targeted nations. In Venezuela alone, the Center for Economic Policy Research estimated that over 40,000 Venezuelans were killed due to sanctions in only one year (between 2017 and 2018). What these sanctions have never been efficient in doing is actually effectuating the regime-change which they are intended to produce. Indeed, such sanctions have tended to rally the people of the targeted nations around their governments.

American professor believes China seeking to ramp up influence in West Asia

By Mohammad Mazhari

TEHRAN - An American professor believes that China is seeking to ramp up its influence in West Asia though he says Washington does not intend to leave the region.

“The U.S. is not withdrawing from the Middle East (West Asia), but overtime I would expect China's influence to increase in the region,” Robert C. Smith, a professor of political science at San Francisco State University, tells the Tehran Times.

Pointing to Persian Gulf Arab states' ties with China, Professor Smith notes that these countries and China “have their own autonomous interests that at some points or on some issues will result in divergences and convergences.”

Over the past two decades, China has become actively involved in the economic and security affairs of the six member states of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

China has been simultaneously pursuing an ambitious foreign policy towards GCC and Iran. It has got closer to these countries in areas of economy and security. However, Beijing has refused to be drawn into regional rivalries or debates over strategic issues in West Asia.

The Persian Gulf Arab states, for their part, regard Beijing as key to their economic future, even as they continue to rely on the United States and other Western powers on matters related to security and defense.

Here is the text of the interview:

The 25-year Iran-China partnership agreement went into effect while Iran's foreign minister visited China on January 13-14. What are the subliminal messages of such a visit when the Vienna talks are still underway?

I think of the Iran-China partnership agreement -not so subliminal- means that China is likely to provide aid to Iran in case the Western powers seek



to intensify the sanctions in case the talks on the nuclear agreement fail.

What are the main impacts of the 25-year partnership on Iran's economy? Can China fill the gap left by Western companies in Iran?

While the agreement cannot fill the gap, its assistance should meliorate to some extent the effect of the U.S. sanctions.

Do you confirm that Biden was slow to start talks to revive the nuclear deal, something that possibly pushed Iran into the arms of China?

The Biden administration should have moved earlier to restore the original agreement, but I doubt it is fair to conclude the U.S. pushed Iran into the arms of China. Both Iran and China have autonomous interests and policies that commend them to cooperation.

How can China strike a right balance between its ties with Iran and the Persian Gulf Arab states? Given alleged collaboration between China and Saudi Arabia to develop ballistic missile, do you think China is going to expand its military influence and fill the power vacuum in West Asia?

It is likely to be difficult in some cases, but again the (Persian) Gulf states and China have their own autonomous interests that at some points or on some issues will result in divergences and convergences. The U.S. is not withdrawing from the Middle East (West Asia), but overtime I would expect China's influence to increase in the region.

Are neocons worried at pace of US-Russia talks?

Was Monday's hyperactivity mostly theater? The Pentagon raised the alert status of 8,500 troops reportedly to bolster NATO's Quick Response Force, while emphasizing that no final decision had been made to deploy them. And NATO announced that some members were sending ships and fighter jets to Eastern Europe to reassure allies in the region.

Adding to the tension, the State Department ordered the families of diplomats to depart from the embassy in Kyiv, with the families of Britain and Australia tagging along close behind. At the same time, the EU's top diplomat, Josep Borrell, was unusually direct in saying: “We are not going to do the same thing [scale down embassies], because we don't know any specific reasons.”

Meanwhile, the corporate media is in even higher dudgeon denouncing Russia's alleged intention to invade Ukraine, despite repeated (and plausible) denials from Moscow that this is the eventual purpose of increased Russian troop strength near Ukraine. It seems the current high tension is being artificially stoked at present, and the question is why.

Let me hypothesize that “the crazies” in Washington, who see political advantage in brinkmanship vis-à-vis Russia, are making a last-ditch effort to pre-empt meaningful progress in the U.S.-Russia negotiations now under way – yes, the talks “everyone knew” would quickly fail. The hawks may feel a particular urgency now, since NATO solidarity is taking on the veneer of a Potemkin village, with Germany, the key odd-man-out, refusing to send weapons to Ukraine.

Officials Tightlipped: Good Sign

Following the initial U.S.-Russia talks in Geneva (9/10 Jan.), there was an abundance of reporting, much of it sourced to the officials involved. After a few days, though, that abruptly stopped, probably by mutual agreement not to complicate negotiations by having to deal with media reporting – accurate or not. The only noteworthy exception was an interview given by Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov who has been very close to President Putin for many years.



On Jan. 16, Peskov appeared on “Fareed Zaharia GPS” to talk about “Russia's demands”.

PESKOV: I officially can tell you that there are no Russian troops ... on Ukrainian soil. But there are Russian troops on the territory of the Russian federation next to Ukrainian borders. And we find it necessary to keep those troops there [because of] the very tense situation and very unfriendly environment created by various training of NATO, jet fighters, NATO spy planes, NATO's military infrastructure moving towards our borders. We have to respond. ... That's why we have our military guys on our territory there.

ZAKARIA: Do you have some kind of a timeline that you are – at which point you will then say the negotiations have failed and are you then prepared to take military action?

PESKOV: No one is threatening anyone with military action. This will be just a madness to do that. But we will be ready to take counteractions. So if you continue to say “Listen, Russians, we're not going to take into account your concerns, NATO will continue to expand ... we're not going to say that we will not deploy any offensive weapons on Ukraine's territory. ...” If you tell us that, we will have to do something. [Emphasis added.]

What is the timeline? ... Well, of course, we're not speaking about tomorrow. We're not speaking about hours, but what was meant by our president is that we don't want to see a process for the sake of the process. So we don't want to see a month-long or yearlong negotiation discussing our disagreements. We want to feel for the beginning the readiness to take into account our concerns. Right now unfortunately we fail to do

that. [Emphasis added.]

Surprise! Blinken, Lavrov to Geneva

Few expected the announcement on Jan. 18 that Lavrov and Blinken would meet on Jan. 21. One can imagine increased apprehensiveness on the part of the neocons, and others who favor tension more than détente, at the unusually rapid continuation of the bilateral negotiations. Worse still, from their point of view, Blinken said he would provide – this week – written comments on Russian concerns.

THE Question: Did someone on the U.S. side take Peskov seriously?

The official silence was briefly broken by Blinken on the (Jan. 23) Sunday TV talk shows. Blinken told Face the Nation, for example, that the path of diplomacy and dialogue is clearly the most responsible thing to do.

“We are answering some of the concerns Russia may have, Russia is answering the many concerns that we have. ... We'll see if ... there are things we can do again on a reciprocal basis that would actually advance collective security in a way that answers some of what we are hearing [from Russia], and Russia answering a lot of what Russia is hearing from us.” (To no one's surprise, in order to balance his remarks, Blinken included the obligatory warnings of “massive consequences” if Russia invades Ukraine.) [Emphasis added.]

The Written Response

Unless the neocons and their Ukrainian proxies manage to disrupt the process, the next step will be the US response to what Russia has put on the table. One encouraging sign comes unofficially from Russian media reports that Blinken told Lavrov that when the US response is handed over, the US does not want the contents released to the media. Political commentator and popular talk show host Vladimir Solovyov commented that this suggests that the White House does not want the Western press to jump on Biden's proposals before they can be digested and evaluated by the Kremlin. Seems a good guess.

(Source: antiwar.com)

The brave uprising in Sudan



From page 1 ► Witnesses saw security forces using teargas and stun grenades as protesters stood around 1.2 km from the presidential palace.

In the cities of Bahri and Omdurman, witnesses saw a heavy security presence and teargas being fired on the main road.

The protests were called by neighborhood resistance committees, which advocate a stance of “no legitimacy, no negotiation, no partnership” towards the military rulership.

One committee reported the arrest of at least four members. Another said its headquarters were raided.

Large protests were held in the city of Madani, where witnesses say protesters marched towards the house of a protester killed on Friday before heading to the state government building.

The third protester was killed there, with gunshots to the head and shoulder, the doctors' committee said.

Protesters are still coming out every day despite being shot down by the military forces, the Sudanese people have also been subjected to internet disconnections, while activists have been targeted and arrested in pre-emptive strikes.

Social media users have shared images of other protests in the cities of El Fasher, Shendi, and Elobeid.

The Sudanese military has also raided media stations and warned them to stop covering the mass protest movement in the country.

The military authorities are widely believed to be strongly aligned with the United States along with the Israeli regime.

Experts say western countries continue to supply financial recourses, weapons, and diplomatic cover to the so-called transitional military council headed by General Abdul Fatah al-Burhan, especially the United States, despite publicly stating otherwise.

As well as promoting the military and being supportive of the ousted and now resigned interim Prime Minister Abdallah Hamdok; they have also been facilitating closer ties between Sudan and the Israeli regime.

With the backing of foreign powers who are supplying weapons to the Sudanese military, the army arrested women's rights activists over the weekend as well as detaining people from the resistance committees that are operating in the neighborhoods of the capital and other cities.

The struggle is not just limited to the military but it has become obvious the people's movement is also against imperialism and foreign hands interfering in Sudan's sovereignty.

This is while foreign allies of the military are afraid of losing their grip on the country.

Sudan is a very important geostrategic country that is a gateway to North Africa and Central Africa.

It's an oil-rich state and it's also a state that has historically supported anti-imperialist struggles including the Palestinian struggle for the liberation of their land from the occupying Israeli regime.

Over the last few years, that has changed, the country under the military leadership was forced to accept the so-called Abraham accords under the administration of former U.S. President Donald Trump that normalized relations between Sudan and the Israeli regime in return for \$1 billion in annual financing.

General al-Burhan said that “Sudan's relationship with Israel may eventually take a natural form.” In a previous interview with Saudi Arabian state media, al-Burhan claimed that normalization with Israel was “necessary to return Sudan to the international community.”

The civilian political parties begged to differ and opposed any form of deal with officials saying they will unite in their opposition against the agreement.

Those parties have in essence been taken out of the picture. But it remains another demand of the protesters, that Khartoum scraps any normalization of ties with the Israeli regime.

Nevertheless, behind the scenes, there have been delegations heading to the occupying Israeli regime and there have been Israeli delegations arriving in Sudan.

The Israeli regime, backed by the United States, is behind the campaign to turn as many countries as possible in Africa and West Asia against their solidarity and support for the state of Palestine and the Palestinian cause.

This is the undercurrent of the so-called Abraham accords and other campaigns being carried out in Africa and West Asia, to try and split the African, Arab and non-Arab communities so they support the Israeli regime.

There is also a movement to infiltrate the African Union to achieve the same goal. This is the objective and Sudan is key to this strategy.

Despite the military gunning down protesters on a regular basis, It's a very critical struggle by the people of Sudan for the entire region of North Africa, the Horn of Africa. What happens in Sudan has ripple effects on the security of Ethiopia as well as Egypt vis-à-vis its relationship with the United States and the Israeli regime.

In 2019, after months of protests, Omar al-Bashir was disposed but was replaced not by the people's choice and popular power but by a so-called military transitional council.

That did not satisfy the protesters and the military-installed a civilian Prime Minister Abdullah Hamdok; only to later detain him and then release and reinstall him again.

However, Hamdok resigned as protesters are demanding a civilian rule with no military interference. Many of the protesters also accused Hamdok of colluding with the military.

The sheer resilience of the people and the masses on the streets means the battle against the military will not be abating anytime soon. The people want civilian rule and democracy and they want it now.

It's up to military forces and their U.S. backers to create the conditions for the emergence of a civilian government which is the core demand of the protesters.

The military must now return to their barracks and allow the civilian population to discuss and openly debate what political future they want.

It's up to the people to decide their future leadership and as things stand they are displaying their anger with the military on a regular basis and they are showing their anger at the foreign hands interfering in their country.

That anger does not appear to be subsiding until the army officers' rule is toppled. It's a very brave struggle as the civilian protesters are being met with the full force of the military.

Tourism potential of Bam is still untapped, governor says



From page 1 ► The property of Bam and its Cultural Landscape is located on the southern edge of the Iranian high plateau close to the Pakistan border.

The origins of the citadel of Bam (“Arg-e Bam”), can be traced back to the Achaemenid period (6th to 4th centuries BC) and even beyond. The heyday of the citadel was from the 7th to 11th centuries, being at the crossroads of important trade routes and known for the production of silk and cotton garments.

The citadel, which contains the governor’s quarters and the fortified residential area, forms the central focus of a vast cultural landscape, which is marked by a series of forts and citadels, now in ruins. The existence of life in the oasis was based on the underground irrigation canals, the qanats, of which Bam has preserved some of the earliest evidence in Iran and which continue to function till the present time.

According to UNESCO, Arg-e Bam is the most representative example of a fortified medieval town built in vernacular technique using mud layers (Chineh), sun-dried mud bricks (khesht), and vaulted and domed structures.

Bam and its Cultural Landscape represents an outstanding example of an ancient fortified settlement that developed

around the Iranian central plateau and is an exceptional testimony to the development of a trading settlement in the desert environment of the Central Asian region. This impressive construction undoubtedly represents the climax and is the most important achievement of its type not only in the area of Bam but also in a much wider cultural region of Western Asia.

The cultural landscape of Bam is an important representation of the interaction between man and nature and retains a rich resource of ancient canalizations, settlements, and forts as landmarks and as tangible evidence of the evolution of the area.

The massive fortress and its environs were almost completely brought down to earth due to a devastating earthquake on December 26, 2003.

Since then, the citadel has undergone a series of restoration projects to regain its former beauty.

The big and sprawling Kerman province has been a cultural melting pot since antiquity, blending Persians with subcontinental tribe dwellers. It is home to myriad historical sites and scenic landscapes such as Bazaar-e Sartasari, Jabalieh Dome, Ganjali Khan Bathhouse, Malek Jameh Mosque, and Shahdad Desert to name a few.

Golestan Palace offers experience you can enjoy from home

TEHRAN – The UNESCO-designated Golestan Palace has provided a new virtual tour of the majestic complex, which is located in downtown Tehran.

“This virtual tour offers 360-degree panoramic views of the palace complex,” the director of the World Heritage site, Afarin Emami, said on Tuesday.

Available in both Persian and English, the tour has been developed according to professional technical and content standards, the official said.

“Moreover, there are no restrictions for visitors as the routes are defined in such a way that they can move freely and selectively indoors and outdoors,” she explained.

UNESCO says that the complex exemplifies architectural and artistic achievements of the Qajar era including the introduction of European motifs and styles into Persian arts.



The royal complex was once the official residence of the Qajar monarchs who ruled the country between 1789 and 1925. It displays a remarkable mixture of ancient Persian and contemporary European architectural styles, which characterized much of Iranian art in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Visitors can simply spend half a day admiring several

key structures that make up the palace, including lots of spectacular halls, chambers, museums, and gardens. All of them were built during the rule of the Qajar kings.

The stunning Karim Khani nook, which was the former residence of the founder of the Zand dynasty (1751 to 1779), and the brilliant Mirror Hall, which was used for royal weddings and coronations, are amongst

the must-see premises of the complex.

Also, the highlights include Shams-ol Emareh (“the Edifice of the Sun”), a palace that offered a panoramic view of the city for the monarchs, and Brilliant Hall, which is known for its incredible display of mirror work.

Visitors may likely take two or three hours to thoroughly explore the palace complex. One can relax by the gorgeous pond in the main garden after all the walking around. Next to the palace lies the bustling Grand Bazaar of Tehran, which is a top place to get a glimpse of local life. Some visitors to the bazaar refer to it as “a city within a city” because it also includes several mosques, guesthouses, banks, and once-thriving caravansaries. While most of its covered structures and marketplaces are associated with the 19th century onwards, the history of trade in the bazaar is rooted much deeper in time.

Tehran museum publishes book on Sassanid coins

TEHRAN – Bank Melli Iran Museum has published a book on coins and coinage during the Sassanid era (224–651).

Co-authored by senior researchers Daryoosh Akbarzadeh and Nikolaus Schindel, the book titled “Catalogue of the Sassanian Coins” turns the spotlight on the precious Piruzan Collection, which is kept at the major museum in downtown Tehran.

Around 220 CE, the Sasanian dynasty of Iran introduced the concept of thin flan coins, issues that were struck in relief on both sides. In order not to produce intolerable stresses in the dies, since the thinner the material the more force necessary to make it flow into the recesses of the die’s design, the depth of relief on such coins was of necessity much shallower than with earlier currency.

Moreover, such techniques spread by way of Byzantium to northern Europe, where



the emperor Charlemagne struck thin flan deniers (small silver coins), or pennies, which became characteristic of both his own and neighboring kingdoms.

Iran under the Sasanian rule witnessed tremendous achievements in many ways. Equally, Sasanian art reached great heights of perfection. Artists excelled in such minor arts as metalwork, seals, and striking coins. The wealth of Iran

was never greater than at that time. The Sasanian culture and art, that had emerged as a result of active interactions of various ethnocultural traditions, have long outlived the Sasanian state, deeply affecting the cultural development of various peoples of the East and West in the subsequent period. The economic and political institutions and cultural traditions that were formed played an important role in history and were preserved for many centuries. The Sasanian period can be regarded as an important stage in the history of the Transcaucasian peoples.

It should be noted that all Sasanian rulers are known to have struck coins, the principal denomination being the silver drachm. Gold, obols, and bronze issues are found only on some specimens and they were less in circulation.

Safavid-era mosque undergoes restoration

TEHRAN – The Safavid-era (1501–1736) Sorkh Mosque in Saveh, central Markazi province has undergone some rehabilitation works, Saveh’s tourism chief has announced.

A budget of 1.2 billion rials (\$4,200) has been allocated to the project, Reza Ayyaz said on Tuesday.

Restoration of the monument began this year and has taken place in several stages, including the application of gypsum plaster with other paint in a traditional method, complete restoration of the eastern façade of the mosque, and the demolition of worn sections, the official explained.

The Sorkh Mosque (Red Mosque) was inscribed on the national heritage list in 1921.

Soaked in history and culture, Saveh is situated in the north of Markazi province at a height of 995 meters above sea level. The climate of this city is warm and semi-arid in

the east by vicinity to desert and cold in the mountainous region of the west.

Iran is home to hundreds of shrines, Imamzadehs, mausoleums, churches, and even fire temples amongst other religious destinations which are dedicated to different faiths.

Mosque locally called masjed, or masjid (“a place of prostration” to God), is any house or open area of prayer in Islam. Generally speaking, the architecture of mosques in Iran is a combination of symmetry, geometric designs, and vibrant colors.

The architecture of the mosques in Iran varies from one region to another, due to geometric structures, materials, and styles specific to each location. These mosques often have very complex structures in which color variations, tiles, and symbolic designs are used.

6,000 historical relics documented in Khuzestan museums

TEHRAN – Some 6,000 relics and historical objects have been documented in museums of Khuzestan province since the beginning of the current Iranian calendar year (March 21, 2021), the deputy provincial tourism chief has announced.

The objects embrace prehistorical relics and ancient relics offerings, which have been unearthed from various tomb chambers and burial sites across

the province, Ahmadreza Hosseini said, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

As these historical objects have a structural instability after discovery, they need protection and restoration, and documentation helps to organize them, the official explained.

After providing stable security protection, the discovered objects will be displayed in the museums across the province, he added.

The southwestern is home to three UNESCO World Heritage sites of Susa, Tchogha Zanbil, and Shushtar Historical Hydraulic System yet it is a region of raw beauty where its visitors could spend weeks exploring. The province is also a cradle for handicrafts and arts whose crafters inherited from their preceding generations.

Lying at the head of the Persian Gulf and bordering

Iraq on the west, Khuzestan was settled about 6000 BC by a people with affinities to the Sumerians, who came from the Zagros Mountains region. Urban centers appeared there nearly contemporaneously with the first cities in Mesopotamia in the 4th millennium. Khuzestan, according to Encyclopedia Britannica, came to constitute the heart of the Elamite kingdom, with Susa as its capital.

Paleolithic or Mousterian times (c. 100,000 BC).

Big and sprawling Kerman province is something of a cultural melting pot, blending various regional cultures over time. It is also home to rich tourist spots and historical sites including bazaars, mosques, caravanserais, and ruins of ancient urban areas.

The southern province is bounded by the provinces of Fars on the west, Yazd on the north, South Khorasan on the northeast, Sistan-Baluchestan on the east, and Hormozgan on the south. It includes the southern part of the central Iranian desert, the Dasht-e Lut.



The first well-documented evidence of human habitation on the Iranian plateau is found from deposits from several excavated cave and rock-shelter sites in the Zagros Mountains, which dates back to Middle

Millennia-old relics discovered in Kerman

TEHRAN – Iranian police have recently confiscated over 40 historical objects, estimated to date back to some 4,000 years ago, from an antique smuggler in Kerman, a senior police official in charge of protecting cultural heritage has announced.

The police traced the smuggler following reports by local people and finally stopped him in a car that resulted in the discovery of 44 bronze antique objects, estimated to date from the second millennium BC, Abdolreza Nazeri said on Tuesday, IRNA reported.

The culprit was detained and handed over to judiciary officials for further investigation, the official added.

Mosque, fortress, and marketplace made national heritage

TEHRAN – Six properties including a mosque, fortress, and marketplace located in Iran’s Kerman province, have recently been inscribed on the national heritage list.

The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts announced the inscriptions on Monday in separate letters to the governor-general of the southern province, CHTN reported.

The inscription is expected to help monuments benefit from further protection on the one hand, and prevention of any possible destruction, on the other hand.

Kerman is something of a cultural melting pot, blending various regional cultures over time. It is also home to rich tourist spots and historical sites including bazaars, mosques, caravanserais, and ruins of

ancient urban areas.

Its historical core was probably founded by the Sassanid king Ardashir I (reigned 224–241 CE). Under the Safavids, who took control in 1501, it came to be known as Kerman and was made capital of the province. The city was sacked by the Uzbeks in 1509 but was quickly rebuilt. Declining Safavid power in the 17th and early 18th centuries allowed Kerman

to be attacked and occupied by Afghan tribesmen in 1720.

Furthermore, Kerman is bounded by the provinces of Fars on the west, Yazd on the north, South Khorasan on the northeast, Sistan-Baluchestan on the east, and Hormozgan on the south. It embraces the southern parts of the central Iranian desert, the Dasht-e Lut, which is a top destination for avid sightseers.



A number of cultural figures including Jebrael Nokandeh, the director of the National Museum of Iran, have offered condolences over the death of the late Mostofifard.

In the 1960s, Mostofifard joined several rounds of excavations in Marlik under the leadership of prominent Iranian archaeologist Ezatollah Negahban.

Situated near the city of Roudbar, Marlik used to be a royal cemetery. It yielded a handful of tomb chambers, skeletal remains and artifacts with amazing gold workmanship.

The funeral procession for the veteran archaeologist is scheduled to be held today.

Iraq committed to preventing COVID patients from entering Iran

TEHRAN – Monitoring of PCR tests has increased at Baghdad and Najaf airports to prevent COVID patients from entering Iran, Iraqi Minister of Health Hani Musa Al-Aqabi said in a meeting with Pir-Hossein Kolivand, head of the Iranian Red Crescent Society.

During the meeting, which was held in Baghdad on Tuesday, the two officials discussed the control of the two countries' land and air borders to prevent COVID patients from entering and leaving and to increase oversight to prevent the issuance of fake test results in Iraq.

Previously, up to 90 percent of the passengers on some flights boarded the plane with a counterfeit coronavirus test, Al-Aqabi stated, adding, at Iran's request, we have increased monitoring of the issuance of PCR tests at airports.

Three infringing laboratories in Baghdad, colluding with tourism and travel companies to issue negative



PCR test certificates to travelers leaving Iraq without conducting a test, were shut down, he noted.

Fake test certificates have now dropped dramatically, but it cannot be said with certainty that the PCR counterfeit test for travelers on both sides of the Iran-Iraq border has dropped to zero, he lamented.

Praising Iran's suggestion for prevention, he said that we will soon provide you with a list of reliable and closely monitored laboratories in Iraq so that travelers leaving Iraq can enter Iran only with the PCS of these laboratories, and of course, you are expected to do the same to ensure the authenticity of the PCR certificate

issued in Iran.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society (IRCS) has enhanced its presence on the land, air, and sea borders to detect infected passengers and quarantine those with Omicron symptoms.

Passengers entering Iran must have a certificate of two doses of the vaccine, a negative test valid for 48 to 72 hours from the date of notification. In case of any symptoms or test positive, they will be quarantined for 14 days at personal expense.

Foreign tourists must buy coronavirus insurance from authorized companies when entering the country, and if they suffer from the pandemic in Iran, they will be provided with a place and treatment for 14 days.

Inbound passengers must have coronavirus insurance, which differs from the routine insurance coverage purchased by all tourists before the coronavirus era.

Budget to prevent wildfires up by 10-fold

TEHRAN – A total of 1 trillion rials (around \$3.6 million) has been allocated to preventing and extinguishing wildfires in the budget bill for the next Iranian calendar year (starting March 21), a 10-fold rise compared to the current year.

During the last two years, there has been no specific credit line for forest and pasture fire-fighting, but a special budget has been allotted in this regard for the next year, Masoud Mansour, head of the FRWMO said.

President Ebrahim Raisi submitted the administration's draft of the national budget bill for the next year 1401, to the Majlis in December 2021. The proposed budget amounted to about 36.31 quadrillion rials (about \$123 billion).

Supplying basic goods, treatment, and medical equipment; securing livelihood; supporting production and employment; promoting and supporting non-oil exports and knowledge-based companies are the focal points of the bill.



Wildfire in natural areas decreases by 49%

The occurrence of wildfire in natural areas has declined by 49 percent since the beginning of the current [Iranian calendar] year compared to the same period last year, deputy commander of the protection unit of the Forests, Rangelands, and Watershed Management Organization has said.

This year, with the implementation of protective measures and increasing public participation

and equipping protection units, the burnt areas in natural resources have decreased by 46 percent compared to the previous year, Ali Mohammadi Moghaddam said in December 2021.

Currently, 5,000 rangers are active to protect natural resources, however, one protection force is needed for every 2,000 hectares of forest and one protection force for every 10,000 hectares of pasture, which has not been achieved in the country due to lack of manpower.

According to Mohammadi Moghaddam, there are currently 135 million hectares of forests and pastures in the country, with one ranger per 6,000 hectares of forest, and one ranger per 30,000 hectares of pastures.

Wildfires are mostly caused by unintentional human error, said that over 90 percent of wildfires are ignited by humans unintentionally while setting fires in nature, smoking, and re-leasing plastic and glass containers.

Blood donation increases by 13.37%

TEHRAN – Over the first ten months of the current [Iranian calendar] year (started March 21, 2021), blood donation has increased by over 13.37 percent compared to the same period last year, Mohammad Reza Mehdizadeh, head of Tehran blood transfusion organization, has said.

Although the first-time blood donation rate decreased by nearly 11 percent during this period, a nearly 13 percent increase in experienced donors could be a sign that the group is joining regular donors (with a history of donating blood at least twice a year), he explained.

Also, during the last 10 months, regular blood donation has increased by 25 percent, which can be expected to help increase the quality of donated blood, he stated.

Referring to the 10,677 blood units donated by women, he noted that a total of 274,765 blood units have been donated across the country, during the aforementioned period.

Over the first nine months of the current [Iranian calendar] year (started March 21), a total of 1,533,582 people donated blood across the country, Bashir Haji-Beigi, the Blood Transfusion Organization spokesman, said in December 2021.

Over 2.1m Iranians donate blood per year

Blood donation in Iran has long been done voluntarily as over 2.1 million Iranians donate blood annually, Haji-Beigi said on June 14.

There are currently 178 blood donation centers in the country, with Fars, Khorasan Razavi, Khuzestan, Tehran,

and Mazandaran provinces having the largest number of blood donation centers, he stated.

Highest blood donation in Eastern Mediterranean

While blood donation in 70 countries still depends on replacement or paid donors, Iran is the first country in the region that has enjoyed voluntary blood donation by 100 percent since 2007.

More than 85 percent of all donated blood worldwide is used to produce blood products, while the rate is 65 percent in Eastern Mediterranean countries. Iran ranks among the highest-income countries in terms of converting more than 97 percent of the blood donated by people to plasma-derived medicinal products (PDMP).

Only 55 of 171 countries produce PDMP through the fractionation of plasma collected in the reporting country. A total of 90 countries reported that all PDMP are imported, 16 countries reported that no PDMP was used during the reporting period, and 10 countries did not respond to the question, according to WHO.



Iran currently has the highest blood donation rate in the Eastern Mediterranean region so out of 9.9 million blood donation units in this region, more than two million belongs to Iran.

Also, the index of blood donation is 25 per 1,000 populations, while in the member states of the Eastern Mediterranean region, this number is 14.9 per 1000.

117.4 million blood donations worldwide

According to the World Health Organization, blood transfusion saves millions of lives and improves health, but many patients requiring transfusion do not have timely access to safe blood.

About 117.4 million blood donations are collected worldwide. 42 percent of these are collected in high-income

countries, home to 16 percent of the world's population.

About 12,700 blood centers in 170 countries report collecting a total of 100 million donations. Collections at blood centers vary according to income group. The median annual donations per blood center are 1,300 in the low-income countries, 4,100 in lower-middle-income countries, and 8,500 in upper-middle-income countries, as compared to 23,000 in the high-income countries.

Data about the gender profile of blood donors show that globally 32 percent of blood donations are given by women, although this ranges widely. In 14 of the 119 reporting countries, less than 10 percent of donations are given by female donors.

Moreover, 62 countries collect 100 percent of their blood supply from voluntary, unpaid blood donors. Some 108 million blood donations are collected globally, half of these are in high-income countries. Meanwhile, blood donation by 1 percent of the population can meet a nation's most basic requirements for blood.

SOCIETY

JANUARY 26, 2022

Straight Truth

TEHRAN TIMES

7

WHO praises Iran for controlling malaria

From page 1 ► and Iran has not registered any indigenous cases of malaria infection in the country over the past three years, IRNA reported on Tuesday.

According to the World Health Organization, a country that has not had a local case for three years is eligible for a malaria eradication certificate.

Among the 22 countries in the Eastern Mediterranean region, the largest country that has been able to eliminate malaria so far is Iran. Many countries, such as the UAE, have achieved this goal, but they are very small and sparsely populated compared to Iran.

There are 20 countries in the world that are moving towards the elimination of malaria.

WHO African Region carries high share of global malaria burden

According to the latest world malaria report released in December 2019, there were 228 million cases of malaria in 2018 compared to 231 million cases in 2017. The estimated number of malaria deaths stood at 405,000 in 2018, compared with 416,000 deaths in 2017.

The WHO African Region continues to car-



ry a disproportionately high share of the global malaria burden. In 2018, the region was home to 93% of malaria cases and 94% of malaria deaths.

In 2018, 6 countries accounted for more than half of all malaria cases worldwide: Nigeria (25%), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (12%), Uganda (5%), and Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique, and Niger (4% each).

Children under 5 years of age are the most vulnerable group affected by malaria. In 2018, they accounted for 67% (272,000) of all malaria deaths worldwide.

Increase in marine heatwaves threatens coastal habitats, report says

An increase in marine heatwaves could threaten the ecosystems in coastal habitats, according to a new study.

Researchers studied the largest estuary in the US and found these heatwaves had increased both in frequency and intensity, the Independent reported.

If these trends persist, the US scientists said this could have dire consequences on the ecosystem of the Chesapeake Bay - potentially causing a decline in fished species, killing bot-

tom-dwelling populations and increase the severity of low oxygen levels in some areas.

Other shallow-water coastal systems around the world could also see the same impacts as the climate crisis warms the planet.

Rising average temperatures are believed to be responsible for marine heatwaves happening more often and with greater intensity.

Scientists found deadly ocean heatwaves that happened in 2016 were made over 50 times more likely by the climate crisis.

ENGLISH IN USE

LEARN NEWS TRANSLATION

COVID-19 lockdown moves most cities out of “red” zone

Strict COVID-19 restrictions which took effect on October 26 have caused 87 out of 89 infected cities to get out of the high-risk “red” zone.

The National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control started strict restrictions in 43 cities that had the highest rate of infection in the country. Ten days later, decisions were made to set new limitations on highly-affected areas for another 10 days, through which 46 cities undergone restrictions.

The plan divided cities into three levels of alert, namely red, orange, and yellow. All of the cities, except for two, are now out of the red condition and have turned orange or yellow so that the hospitalization rate has decreased, said Alireza Raeisi, the National Headquarters for Coronavirus Control spokesman, expressing hope that the death toll will also drop within two to three weeks.

In some 160 cities and towns that were on the highest alert, the disease prevalence has begun to decrease in about 145 cities. And the remaining 15 cities will also experience a downward trend this week, he explained.

امعال محدودیت ها اکثر شهرها را از وضعیت قرمز خارج کرد

علیرضا رئیسی، سخنگوی ستاد ملی مقابله با کرونا گفت: از ۸۹ شهری که از پنجم آبان محدودیت‌های کرونایی در آنها اعمال شده است، ۸۷ شهر از وضعیت قرمز خارج شده اند. او با اشاره به محدودیت های کرونایی در ۸۹ شهری که (از ۱۵ آبان در ۴۳ شهر و از ۱۴ آبان در ۴۶ شهر) اعمال شده است، گفت: از این تعداد به جز دو شهر همه شهرها از حالت قرمز خارج و به نارنجی یا زرد تبدیل شده اند. با توجه به ورودی بیمارستان ها و اینکه میزان بستری هم کاهش یافته است امیدواریم روند فوتی ها هم تا حدود دو تا سه هفته دیگر آثار خود را نشان دهد و روند کاهشی پیدا کند.

وی اعلام کرد: اکنون در ۱۶۰ شهر و شهرستان که قرمز رنگ بودند در حدود ۱۴۵ شهر روند کاهش بیماری آغاز شده است. در ۱۵ شهر باقیمانده هم در همین هفته این روند کاهشی شروع خواهد شد.

COVID-19 UPDATES ON JANUARY 25

New cases	9,378
New deaths	23
Total cases	6,267,559
Total deaths	132,274
New hospitalized patients	632
Patients in critical condition	1,241
Total recovered patients	6,085,073
Diagnostic tests conducted	44,230,284
Doses of vaccine injected	129,532,427

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JANUARY 26, 2022

GUIDE TO SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

A fool's mind is at the mercy of his tongue and a wise man's tongue is under the control of his mind.

Imam Ali (AS)

Prayer Times » Noon:12:17 Evening: 17:45 Dawn: 5:41 (tomorrow) Sunrise: 7:08 (tomorrow)

Hafez and music

Part 1 Sound patterning and extra-prosodic sonority

The poetics of Hafez, perhaps more so than many Persian poets, depends on a sensuality of language and imagery.

Smell, taste, texture, color and certainly sound imagery abound, often mixing synaesthetically. Enchanting music, bewitching beauty, intoxicating fragrance and delectable savor, even when not explicitly invoked, are often implied by the setting of the ghazals – the real or stylized wine symposium, with its locus classicus in Athens, its establishment in Persia during the Hellenistic period and its later development in the khamriyat of the Islamic tradition.

Complementing this thematic sensuality in the ghazals of Hafez is an often tactile sonority created by a thick texture and complex patterning of sounds. We know Hafez to have been competitively conscious of the work and wording of other poets, which he often quotes, adapts and improves upon.

While such judgments can be subjective, Mohammad-Reza Shafiei-Kadkani offers a quantitative comparison of a ghazal by Salman-e Savaji which Hafez emulated in the same rhyme and radif. He concludes that Savaji exhibits many more phonetic glitches and dissonances than does Hafez and proposes on the basis of existing manuscript variants that Hafez, who composed his poems carefully (at an average rate of no more than 10 per year), revised them later with an eye toward innovative or striking sonorities.

The poet's nom de plume indicates one who has memorized the Quran; perhaps an intimate practical knowledge of the cantillation rules (tajwid and tartil) and the fourteen canonical recitations honed the poet's sensibility to harmonizing melody and text, and also to phonetics, particularly the place of articulation of consonants and the rules for assimilation, pharyngealization, nasalization, etc.

Thus, beyond the traditional sound patterning (e.g., meter, rhyme, radif) and phono-semantic play (parallelism, paronomasia and other types of jenas) expected by the Persian manuals of rhetoric and prosody, Hafez often seems quite consciously to employ phonetic patterning, particularly consonance and assonance, which were not generally stipulated or even articulated as stylistic objectives in traditional Persian poetry.

These include carefully crafted onomatopoeic passages, such as the gurgling of the juice of the grapevine as it pours from the jug in . . . ke Khun-e khom / ba naghma-ha-ye qolqola andar galu . . . , with its repeated velar/uvular consonants, the plosives bracketing fricatives.

Note the phonoaesthesia of the condemnatory dentals and growling “r”s that are ultimately hushed by the semantic sweetness and relaxed phonemes at the end of the following hemistich: samat-e dahr-e dun-parvar na-darad shahd-e asayesh / Fate's table fattens the base and affords no honey of repose.

In the hemistich feghan k-in lulan-e shukh-e shirin-kar-e shahr-ashub, alliteration, consonance, assonance and alternating consonant-vowel parallelism (syllable initial . . . lu li . . . shu . . . shi . . . sha . . . shu and word-final an, in, ian . . . in . . . as well as word-medial iri . . . ar-e . . . ahr-a . . .) heighten the stirring sense of tumult visited upon the town by gypsy beauties with their cloying, clowning ways.

Source: Encyclopedia Iranica
To be continued

Likewise, the textures of the bitter-sharp yet silky-smooth rose-red wine intoxicate the phonetic palate in the following hemistich: bada-ye golrang-e talkh-e tiz-e khosh-khar-e sabok. Finally, in sharab-e talkh-e sufi-suz bonyad-am be-kahad bord, the sibilants and fricatives (sh, kh, s, f, s, z, kh) blaze around the more solid plosives (b, t, b, d, b, d, b, d) to simulate with sound the bitter fiery vintage as it burns the Sufi's frame to the ground. Similar examples are given by Hillmann and Eslami-Nodushan.

Poems set to music vs. plain poems

In 1962, Homai proposed in several footnotes to his edition of Osman Mokhtari Ghaznavi's Divan that poems which had been formerly described as being in bahr-e na-matbu (literally, “unpleasant meters”), had originally been composed as lyrics for occasional entertainments, and performed to rhythmic musical accompaniment by singers (qawwalan, rameshgaran).

Homai thought these metrically unwieldy poems, typically quatrains or short qet'as composed to suit a specific occasion or to fit a particular musical piece, were similar to the early tarana and do-bayti, or the modern tasnif.

Homai linked these poems of “unpleasant meters” with the category identified by classical rhetoricians (including Shams-e Qays) as she'r-e malhun, or poetry set to music, in contrast to she'r-e mojarraḍ, or plain poetry, which was not amenable to musical accompaniment.

Though susceptible to prosodic scansion according to one of the various modifications of the classical quantitative meters (e.g., mozare'-e motamman-e akhrab-e makfuf-e maslukk, or rajaz-e mosaddas-e mashkul, or wa-fer), a supplemental accent-based musical rhythm would be superimposed in performance on the she'r-e malhun.

Eventually, however, these poems gained status as literary qasidas, at which point they came to be preserved in divans, and their musical associations were gradually forgotten. However, their metrical patterns did not readily correspond to meters commonly in use, and thus were felt to be “unpleasant” or uncouth with respect to the elite literary forms, and could be subject to corruption by well-meaning scribes trying to harmonize the prosody to expectations.

Heshmat Moayyad, Julie Scott Meisami, Shafiei-Kadkani, and Sirus Shamisa have generally accepted the notion that some Persian poems were composed as song lyrics, though as yet this consensus has not been systematically applied to the study of Persian genre development and editorial theory.

Though Hafez does not use this term malhun, he does use a variety of terms to indicate words set to music and/or the melodies that accompany lyrics.

The Persian ghazal emerged in the Ghaznavid period as lyrics composed by poets for singers to perform, and Hafez frequently associates the words ghazal and qawl with music, musicians, singers and songbirds. A generation after the death of Hafez, Abd al-Qader Maraghi (d. 1435) explains that the nawba, or musical performance suite, consists of four movements, structured as follows: 1) qawl, in which Arabic poems are sung 2) ghazal, in which Persian poems are sung 3) tarana, consisting of a robai text sung in either language 4) forudasht, in which Arabic poems are sung.

Culture ministry welcomes art market boom from Tehran Auction sales

TEHRAN – Iranian Deputy Culture Minister for Art Affairs Mahmud Salari said that his office welcomes any boom in the art market resulting from the sales at the Tehran Auction.

The 15th edition of the Tehran Auction took place last week collecting 1588.9 billion rials (over \$5.9 million). All 80 artworks offered at this auction were sold.

Following the sales, certain individuals have questioned the financial arrangements made by the Tehran Auction. They have accused the auction house of money laundering, but have failed to provide any evidence to substantiate their allegations.

Speaking to the Persian service of ISNA on Monday, Salari stated, “I have no concerns about the existing financial mechanism at the Tehran Auction, and I welcome any boom in the country's art market.”

He said, “Some people have spoken about money laundering and dubious money sources at the auction house, which, if true,

Mahmud Salari speaks during his inauguration as deputy culture minister in art affairs in Tehran on December 8, 2021. (Honaronline/Mohammad Namazi)

the relevant organizations should investigate the issue.”

He noted that the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance is not the organization responsible for investigating the issue.

Salari, previously a teacher of Iranian vocal music, was appointed as the deputy culture minister in art affairs last December. Since that time, his office has initiated programs geared towards boosting the art market.

“In the first stage, we launched a number of platforms, which gave artists an equal opportunity to offer their artworks, find customers and receive orders,” he said.

“I'm not an expert on the art market, but we can provide artists with facilities that can help them to better showcase their artworks,” he stated.

He also announced the culture ministry's plan to establish art academies across the country offering free education for all.

Some of the academies are scheduled to begin working Saturday, Salari said.

“In each province, an art academy for girls and one for boys will be inaugurated and prominent art masters will be dispatched to the centers to teach them,” he added.

The academies have also been assigned to discover their talents and fulfill their potential, he noted in conclusion.

German, Austrian premieres of “Ballad of a White Cow” set for Feb. 3

Avin Purraufi and Maryam Moqaddam act in a scene from “Ballad of a White Cow”.

TEHRAN – Acclaimed Iranian drama “Ballad of a White Cow” will begin its premiere in Germany and Austria on February 3.

German distribution outfit Weltkino has purchased the German and Austrian rights to the movie co-directed by Behtash Sanaeiha and

Maryam Moqaddam, who also plays the leading character, Mina.

The film follows Mina, a woman whose life is turned upside down when she learns that her husband Babak was innocent of the crime for which he was executed.

The authorities apologize for the mistake and offer the prospect of financial compensation. Mina starts a silent battle against a cynical system for her own and her daughter's sake. Just as her money is running out, a stranger named Reza knocks at her door, saying he has come to repay a debt he owed to Babak. Mina is guarded at first, but increasingly lets Reza into her life, unaware of the secret that ties them to one another.

“Ballad of a White Cow”, a co-production between Iran and France, has been screened at over 30 international festivals across the world.

Tehran theater hosts “Woyzeck”

A poster for “Woyzeck” on stage at Tehran's Orkideh Hall.

Marie's affair with a drum major. Filled with rage, he explodes into violence.

Buchner left “Woyzeck” incomplete at his death in 1837, but it has been posthumously

“finished” by a variety of authors, editors and translators.

Woyzeck deals with the dehumanizing effects of doctors and the military on a young man's life. It is often seen as a working-class tragedy, though it can also be viewed as having another dimension, portraying the perennial tragedy of human jealousy.

The play was admired both by the German naturalist Gerhart Hauptmann and, subsequently, by expressionist playwrights.

“Woyzeck” has become one of the most performed and influential plays in the German theater repertoire.

The play has previously been

performed by several Iranian troupes.

With the Golbang Theater Group, Qasem Tangsirnejad and Mahsa Rahsepar co-directed “Woyzeck” at the Ginger Theater Festival, an international festival of youth running in the Russian city of Tula in 2021.

The group also staged the play at the 17th HIGH FEST International Performing Arts Festival in Yerevan, Armenia, in 2019.

Reza Servati also directed “Woyzeck” at Piccolo Teatro in Milan, Italy and in Nancy, France, in 2017. His troupe had performed the play at Tehran's Hafez Hall during winter 2013.

The lonely man in the days of the war

An Interview with Leila Nazari Gilande about Haj Jalal's life

The “Haj Jalal” by Leila Nazari Gilande is the memories of Jalal Hajibabaei, his family and, what happened to them during the war. According to the author, probably one of the reasons he was chosen to write Haj Jalal's memoirs is that he also experienced a rural lifestyle as the main character. His last name is the name of a village in Ardabil province where he was born and raised. Nazari was born in 1985. She is one of the most active writers in the field of war and has published 18 books so far.

“What has inspired you to write about war?”

I was not a professional writer, but I was a researcher in the research section of the broadcasting organization who also liked writing. In 2010, a friend of my father, who was a fighter, gave me his diary to read, and reading it, I saw a couple of mistakes that I suggested the author to correct and that was the exact moment I got the idea of writing the memories of my own city's fighters. I became so interested in books about holy defense, so I went to the library and read everything there about the memories of our city and other cities on those days, until one day when I felt that I can challenge myself. I went to the person who was in charge of that place and asked him whether there was any warrior to write about. He wanted me to write about Colonel Ali Ghaffari's memories in one or two pages to see what I could

do but instead of one or two pages, they got a book about him which was shocking for them. After giving my book, I went out to buy a laptop by selling my ring and then type the book “To The Arvand” which was the memories of Colonel Ali Ghaffari, and from now on, I was a writer.

“Behind the Waiting Windows”, memories of six wives of captive soldiers and, “The Role of Women in Ardabil Province in Holy Defense” were the following books I wrote. After that, I was constantly looking for a new case to write about and so far 18 books have been published.

“How long did it take to write the book?”

In May 1996, I went to Hamedan for a while with my friend, Maryam Zandi who help me a lot while interviewing Haj Jalal there, and when we came back, with some editing, I finished it until the new year.

“What period of his life did you write?”

I wrote his story back when he was still a child until now that he an old gardener.

“Tell us a little about the challenges during the interview

He had forgotten some information due to aging, so I had to talk with his family and some of his relatives too. I had conversations with his wife, daughter, son, his sister, and his cousin.

“Which parts of these memories were more

important to you, being a fighter or being the father of a martyr?”

The memories were not just about him as a worrier or martyr's father. They were about his whole family and their stories in different and difficult situations like when all the men in the family got killed and remained the only man one with so many responsibilities as an old man who tried to be strong in front of his wife and daughters but cried a lot when he was alone.

“Which part of the book impressed you the most?”

It was the part when one day, he came home and found the room of his son's wife empty and dark, and he realized that she went back to his father's house after his husband got killed. Then, when his own daughter became a widow and a grandchild who didn't have a father any longer. These all tragedies were a lot for him to tolerate.

After his sons and son-in-law got killed, Jalal himself decided to go to the war with his sister's husband, but he got killed too and Haj Jalal came back home with five children and no father.

“Why did he decide to go to the war?”

He said the boys and grooms were gone and it was his turn. It was more like he was going to fine his sons.